

THE  
C A S E  
OF  
Richard Downing Jennings,  
AN  
ENGLISH SUBJECT,  
WHO  
RESIDED AT SAINT EUSTATIUS,  
AS A MERCHANT,  
When that Island was captured by  
Lord RODNEY and General VAUGHAN  
In the Year 1781.

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*The law, which ordains confiscations, sets a price on the head of the subject; with the guilty punishes the innocent; and, by reducing them to indigence and despair, tempts them to become criminal. — BECCARIA.*

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*Speak of me as I am:  
Nothing extenuate, — nor set down aught in malice.*  
SHAKESPEAR.

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To the READER.

THE veneration I entertain for the Constitution of my country, and the right I have to partake of its privileges, impel me to intrude upon the public with a short Narrative relative to the capture of St. Eustatius.

The names I have been obliged to mention could not have been omitted without particular injury to the story. I have suppressed some interesting facts from prudential considerations, contenting myself with having made them known there only where it was indispensibly necessary, and could be done with security.

If the obtaining restitution be out of my reach, the justification of my character is a duty still resting upon me, for the sake of my injured family ; — and to the indulgent public I appeal, with a diffidence which often accompanies the injured and unfortunate.

The perusal of these facts will perhaps be found interesting to the nation at large, and to those particularly who already have, or are likely

likely to have, commercial establishments in foreign countries.

If, in the number of readers, there be found one, who, by industry and incessant labour for a series of years, in the most inhospitable climate, has acquired such a competency as encouraged the hope of providing for a numerous family, and from whom all has been snatched, in a moment, by the merciless hand of military power, he will join in the exclamation, that, however serious the accusation, the prejudiced judge should not act as executioner ; — and, that a power to condemn, and to confiscate, for his own emolument, joined in the same person, is inconsistent with the policy of an enlightened nation, and with the rights of Englishmen !

T H E

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THE  
C A S E  
O F

Richard Downing Jennings.

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**I**N order to make the reader acquainted with my right as a British subject, it is necessary to premise, that I am a native of the ancient colony of Bermuda; and that I removed thence in the year 1766, when all Europe was at peace, to the Dutch free port of Saint Eustatius, for the purpose of trade only; with the laudable intention of bettering my fortune, but not of abandoning my country.

The constitution of the free port of Saint Eustatius was peculiarly favourable to foreign settlers; some have passed many years there without having been required to take an oath; a peaceable conformity to the laws was alone expected; residence conferred the ordinary rights of burgership; and, when  
I went



I went to settle at that island, the governor of it was as much admired for the urbanity of his manners as for the strength of his understanding.

The subjects of civilized nations, who form commercial establishments in foreign countries, are not considered as enemies to their native country, or made so by undue restrictions. The knowledge and wealth they acquire add to the stock of their own nation; though abroad, their rights as citizens are preserved entire, and their native attachment is strengthened by frequent regulations in their favour. Under such encouragements, their industry and enterprise are valuable to their mother-country, and they are classed in the number of its most useful subjects.

No legal or political restraint exists to prevent Englishmen from travelling, or taking up their residence in foreign countries. On the contrary, many branches of, or dependents upon, houses in Great Britain, have formed establishments in different foreign ports of Europe, and consuls have been appointed to watch over their commercial interests. Upon the same principle, but without this peculiar protection, English merchants have established themselves in the West-Indies, and particularly at St. Eustatius, a place which promised great commercial advantage.

The government of this country has not only opened various free ports upon different occasions, but in the late war countenanced that of St. Eustatius, by passing an act to make it the entrepôt for tobacco, an article of great consequence to the revenue; but which could only be got from countries actually at war with this, in return for supplies  
to



to them, and from which the enemy of course received its share of advantage.

I resided at St. Eustatius when the late war commenced. The object of my establishment there was trade, not agency. Those, with whom I immediately associated myself, were my brother and a kinsman, both natives of Bermuda, and British subjects. The Dutch were not involved in the war; and there did not appear any necessity for me to leave all my concerns in confusion, and abandon an establishment, the result of ten years labour and expence, or to trust to hazard for a new settlement in other quarters. I continued as in peace a general merchant, and did not attempt to restrain myself in a commerce, which was perfectly free and eagerly pursued as well by the merchants of this as of other countries;—but acted directly in favour of none of the belligerent powers, except Great Britain. Every merchant, of what nation soever, who followed this line of distinction at that free port, was enabled to contribute to the general wealth and revenue of his mother country, while he was enriching himself; and at the same time had opportunities of procuring useful intelligence, for which the situation of St. Eustatius, and the great resort to it, were most peculiarly favourable. No merchant, whose profession is buying and selling, will refuse to part with his goods for a fair equivalent. Other nations derived political as well as commercial advantages from this free port, and the British commanders in that neighbourhood had in this way a superiority over their rivals, — for the place abounded with Englishmen; some of whom  
had

had built and endowed the only foreign church to be seen in that island.

The business, carried on by myself and partners, has been advantageous to the British colonies and the British empire. From the year 1774 to 1781, we exported goods to Great Britain to the amount of £200,000, for which 75,000 was paid in duties, to the increase of the national revenue, and the remainder was employed in ordinary commercial transactions of considerable advantage to the manufactures of this country.

In the year 1772, having afforded relief to the deputies of the king of Spain, and the passengers and crews of two Spanish register-ships, wrecked on the English island of Anguilla; the court of Spain condescended to grant a particular permission to invest the amount of what I had advanced on that occasion in the produce of Porto Rico.—This circumstance enabled me to increase the market for the manufactures of Great Britain, and to furnish mules, mill-timber, live cattle, and other useful articles to its West-India colonies.

In the course of the late war, the English islands received almost daily supplies of provisions, and every necessary of life through the free port of St. Eustatius; their inhabitants, when captured by the enemy, found an asylum there for their persons and effects: after the policy of parliament adopted the expedient of the tobacco-act, nineteen thousand four hundred and seventy-eight hogheads of tobacco (which increased the revenue near two million sterling) were shipped, through the medium of the neighbouring English islands, from St. Eustatius to Great Britain, with which there was a very  
extensive

extensive and unrestrained commercial intercourse from that island; in peace it was a place of great resort, and in war became the fair at which the subjects of contending nations met, and bartered their commodities with each other.

It is to be regretted, that it had no credit for the advantages it afforded this kingdom and its colonies, and that some of the British commanders on that station neglected the offers, as well of supplies as of intelligence, made from thence. Notwithstanding the assertions, which, to serve a purpose, have been hazarded to the contrary, there has never existed an instance, in which every article at that market would not have been furnished by the British residents there, for the service of this nation, in preference to every other; though their vessels, sailing under the neutral flag of the port, were captured in an arbitrary manner, and condemned on the most frivolous pretences in the neighbouring Admiralty Courts; and, though overtures on important occasions, from individual British merchants residing there, were neither attended to nor acknowledged;—perhaps, if a British consul had been appointed to that island in an early stage of the war, that with the Dutch might have been prevented, or the dignity of the nation might have been preserved from prostitution when it did happen. The relative value of St. Eustatius to this country has been misunderstood, or wantonly misrepresented; as will be acknowledged by all who know the subject.

My own personal claim to the reader's attention depends on the following circumstances, supported by the proofs referred to in the Appendix, and by others, which can be produced.

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I was



I was applied to by Governor General Burt, on the 19th of October, 1778, soon after the surprize of Dominica, for a supply of arms and ammunition, for the use of the garrison of St. Kitts. (See Appendix, letter A.) I spared no pains or exertion in executing this commission; paid ready money for the articles, and sent them, in the most secure and expeditious manner, within three days. (See Appendix, B.) The governor was so well satisfied with my conduct, that upon their arrival he, on the 7th of November, wrote to thank me for the assiduity, secrecy, and dispatch, with which I had executed his order. (See Appendix, C.) I had some apprehensions of pecuniary risk in this transaction, which were not ill-founded; for, the governor died not long after the receipt of these stores,—and, as he acted without the concurrence of the legislature of the island, who had refused him a vote of supply upon the occasion, it was above three years before I was reimbursed this advance, without receiving any compensation for the interest of my money.

When Admiral Byron, in the month of June, 1779, anchored at St. Kitts, after the engagement with Count D'Estaing off Grenada, I offered to supply that commander with spars, cordage, and other naval or military stores, which could be procured at St. Eustatius. This offer was made in writing, and, though not accepted, the gentleman, who handed it to the admiral, wrote me that the overture was opportunely made, and for articles very much wanted. (See Appendix, D.)

On the 26th of July, 1779, I dispatched an express to Admiral Byron, then lying at St. Kitts, with



with information of an unexpected event, which was the first that admiral received on the occasion. This I repeated the next morning, with other important particulars, by a frigate, which accidentally called at St. Eustatius. (See Appendix, E.) In this step I exposed a considerable part of my property, and a valuable privilege, to the most imminent danger.

B. E. Joel, Esq. captain of the Queen's American Rangers, had been driven off the coast of America, and came to St. Eustatius, with thirty recruits under his care, in the utmost distress. I relieved them with a supply of money, and advanced several other sums, at different times, to officers in the British service, and to persons who pretended to be such;—all of which I totally lost.

My agent at Porto Rico relieved Captain Hawkins, and the officers and crew of his Majesty's ship the Deal-Castle, in the most honourable and disinterested manner, when wrecked on that island, in the dreadful hurricane of October, 1780. (See Appendix, F.) The money advanced on this occasion was also very nearly lost, as the first and second copies of the bills, given by Captain Hawkins, were seized at the capture of St. Eustatius, and withheld from me by the admiral's captain, in presence of General Vaughan.

The president of the council of St. Kits, in June, 1780, sent a respectable merchant of that island to intreat me to assist in discovering the writer of several anonymous letters he had received, containing overtures for the communication of some very interesting intelligence. I was fortunate enough to succeed in discovering the author of the

letters, who communicated what he already knew, and proposed a feasible plan for regularly obtaining farther information. The danger to which I should expose my property, and the difficulty of engaging in such a scheme, were obvious to all who had any acquaintance with the nature of commerce at a free port; but the crisis appeared so important to the success of Great Britain, and the plan of information of so much consequence, that I cheerfully embarked in it, without being deterred by selfish considerations. This was immediately communicated to the solicitor-general of the Leeward Islands; (see Appendix, G.) to Admiral Rodney's confidential agent; (see Appendix, H.) and by him to a distinguished officer at Antigua; to an active and disinterested general then at St. Kitts, who corresponded with General Vaughan, his superior, upon the subject; (see Appendix, I.) and a person, lately dead, was employed by Lord Rodney's agent, and had an interview with that admiral and General Vaughan, in order to fix upon a regular mode of proceeding.

In such a juncture, as every article of intelligence was of the utmost importance, I transmitted all I could possibly obtain, from time to time, through the merchant, and directly to Mr. Akers; which last, on the part of the admiral and general, expressed himself in terms of the warmest approbation for services so opportunely performed. (See Appendix, K.)

Without waiting for these letters, I had on account of the exigency of the moment, and, to seize so advantageous an opportunity, advanced to the anonymous writer 412*l.* 10*s.* and afterwards 134*l.* sterling more, (see Appendix, L.) making, with

with the expence of expreffes, in all, 567 *l.* 4*s.* to enable him to execute his miffion; the importance of which can only be conceived by a full recital of all the circumftances with which it was connected.

On all thefe occafions, I was ftimulated by a natural attachment to this kingdom. When the public fervice of it was in queftion, I charged neither profit nor commiffion; many of the individuals I relieved were not in a fituation to make me compenfation; the intelligence I communicated was voluntary and without ftipulation; I foli-cited no public notice or reward; I apprehended no invafion by the Britifh at St. Euftatius; and much lefs feared any confequences from one like thofe which followed the capture by Lord Rodney and General Vaughan; my property in commercial circulation was expofed; and, though fhielded by the neutral flag of the government under which I had local protection, was frequently, on trivial pretences, condemned in the admiralty-courts.

Mr. Akers's letter (K) muft again be referred to; the reader is requested to perufe it with attention. It will appear, that, in a matter of the utmoft importance to the nation, and which was attended with particular risk to myfelf, I had voluntarily advanced my own money; and that I had ftipulated for no condition but that of concealing my name; for which, and to make fuitable returns for fervices fo meritorioufly attempted, *he, the confidential agent to the Britifh commanders, in their names, pledged the faith of government.*

Let us mark the event.

Six months after the receipt of this letter, the capture of St. Euftatius by the Britifh fleet and army, commanded by Lord Rodney and General Vaughan,



Vaughan, happened ; without any declaration of war, or previous notice to the subjects of any nation. The island surrendered, at the first summons, to the *clemency* and *magnanimity* of the captors. I was the person who wrote the surrender. I had never seen Admiral Rodney or General Vaughan. At Grenada, St. Kit's, Dominica, and Tobago, islands which had been taken in the late war, and the first by storm, *private property* on-shore, though belonging to enemies, had not been touched, and the captors entered into a reasonable composition with the proprietors for what was afloat ; that of neutrals had been preserved inviolate with scrupulous caution. Englishmen, for whom the laws of their country had provided a tribunal, to which they are told an injured subject can resort with certainty of redress, had nothing to fear from Englishmen, — *till St. Eustatius was taken*. — There the order of things was reversed ; English commanders in chief, infected with the commercial mania of the place, became merchants : — Englishmen were plundered, and their goods were sold to the French, — *whose vessels, laden with the spoil, sailed as truces to their own blockaded ports*.

The assurances of public acknowledgement, which I had so recently received from Lord Rodney and General Vaughan, through the same agent, under whose advice and influence the fate of St. Eustatius and its inhabitants had fallen, made it impossible to suspect that any thing dishonourable was intended towards me ; and I was ready to attribute a conduct, not to be accounted for upon principles of justice or national dignity, to political expedience. — I was admitted to conversations both with the  
admiral



admiral and general very soon after their arrival. I was applied to for information upon many occasions; frequently saw the general; was once consulted by the admiral, and my advice applauded. Orders were issued for me to supply the army and navy; which I did to the amount of 2163*l.* 6*s.* sterl.—The admiral directed me, in consequence of the representation I made on the subject, to make a return of the property afloat in the bay, which came under the protection of the royal proclamation in favour of the captured islands. This was the act of one day.

I soon experienced a melancholy reverse of treatment. The receipts, I had been directed to take for what I had delivered for the use of the navy, I was in the evening of the same day compelled to deliver up, and they were torn in my presence by the officer who issued the order. Upon presenting the return abovementioned, prepared by command of the admiral, and which I had done with accuracy and dispatch, that nobleman, (who the day before had distinguished me by his attention,) on this occasion, in the presence of General Vaughan, descended to the most vulgar abuse, and, without examination, reprobated the paper, which contained proofs of its own authenticity, and was delivered by a person who had before given proofs that he was incapable of asserting a falsehood. The army and navy continued to call for supplies, which I had neither inclination or power to refuse, and which I delivered to the amount of £7568 12*s.* sterling; but was threatened with military execution if I asked for a receipt. My property, that sum included, to the amount of £47000, was the first confiscated, and I was shortly afterwards, without warning, formally banished, (see Appendix, M.) in a manner so unworthy the  
*British*

*British character*, that I forbear to recite any other particulars than that I was the only person that was served with a written order to quit the island with my family: no accommodation of a vessel was afforded to transport them; and, though by a public act of the commanders in chief, I was compelled to pay money to General Vaughan's secretary for a permit to pass the centinels into the boat. And, after the departure of those commanders, when the distraction of the moment had subsided, and a form of government was restored, I applied for, but could not procure leave, for the return of my family, for reasons expressed in Appendix, N. who were thus obliged to remain at a distance from their home, exposed to very great inconvenience, and at considerable expence. — The treatment, I received on this occasion, I have been willing to attribute to the influence and selfish jealousy of those immediately about the person of the admiral. Conscious of no crime, I solicited and encouraged the most minute enquiry into my general conduct; no accusation or complaint was openly preferred against me, — and an opportunity to justify myself was refused to my repeated importunities.

In the first interview, I had acknowledged, that my pursuits as a merchant furnished me with opportunities of commercial intercourse with all the different nations in that neighbourhood.

Though many opportunities and temptations had offered themselves, and though I continued to trade with them as a merchant, I had never in any instance, directly or indirectly, given the smallest information to the enemies of my country; and had been ready, upon every emergency, to promote the  
interests

interests of Great Britain. I delivered up my letter books, when I might have secreted them; a voluntary submission to such an order had no appearance of guilt; after having been sent to England, to the great prejudice of my private affairs, and long detained, they were at last restored to me by a gentleman, to whom I am greatly indebted for so disinterested an act of courtesy; and as the purpose which made them necessary to me has been answered, are ready to be delivered up again, if required; for, I am conscious they will be found the records of many well-meant and zealous acts of service to this kingdom. The officer, to whom the examination of them was committed at St. Eustatius, and who accompanied them to the secretary of state's office, though strongly impressed with all the prejudices and partialities incident to the service in which he was engaged, and a stranger to commercial transactions on general principles, — is a man of honour and a gentleman, and, to his candid report of their contents, I trust I may appeal.

I was surprised to learn, that the contents of these letter-books were called in question by Lord Rodney, (in my absence, after I had returned to the West-Indies, in order to repair my broken fortunes,) to the injury of my reputation, and to obstruct my legal claims: as I had frequently seen his lordship while I was in England, in 1782 and 1783, and among other expressions of civility, he had condescended to tell me, that *I had been cruelly treated, and that he would recommend me to the notice of his majesty's ministers.*

The regard due to my own character, which has been affected by the obloquy thrown on me at St. Eustatius, obliges me to compare Lord Rodney's  
C statement



statement of his proceedings, respecting that capture, with his actual conduct during his long stay at that island; that the impartial public might judge of the motives which influenced his treatment of the merchants there; and whether his measures were directed by views as disinterested and honourable as those to which he has laid claim, or will tend to invalidate the charges, on which his lordship has ventured to rest his justification.

I ruminate with patriotic pleasure on the exploits of the great and fortunate commander, whose name is mentioned in this narrative; and bewail the necessity which compels me to speak clearly on the disgusting subject.

I shall not enlarge upon the particular severities, which were exercised upon the inhabitants of St. Eustatius, by the military parade, with which they were kept in perpetual terror, while every necessary of life, for the space of twenty-seven days, before the retail shops were permitted to be opened, was withheld; and that from the same cause the sick soldiers died for want of nourishment: though I cannot lightly pass over the 13th of February, — a day of desolation to the community at large, and the Jews in particular. Impressed with the shocking scene, I implored of General Vaughan a suspension of the barbarous proclamation, published on the morning of that day.—I represented how different the conduct of the French had been, to such as by the fortune of war had fallen into their power, and urged every argument, which the most acute feelings on that distressing subject could dictate. Having obeyed the general's order, to commit what I had said to writing; a consultation followed between himself and Lord Rodney, and a note was sent me in the hand-



hand-writing of the general's secretary, enquiring *where the Jews would choose to go*. In the mean time these poor wretches, without respect to age, infirmity, or attachment to the British interests, had been driven like cattle into boats, and transported, nobody knew where. The captain of the burghers, whose partiality to the English had been notorious, was sent on-board a man of war, as a prisoner, in a very infirm state of health, and died in a few days after he was re-landed; notwithstanding the tenderness and humanity with which Captain Robertson, of the Shrewsbury, treated the old gentleman, a conduct which has impressed all who were privy to the circumstance, with a high opinion of the liberality of that gallant officer's sentiments.—I am particular in this recital, beause it had escaped the recollection of the general, when the subject was discussed in the House of Commons.

It will however be necessary to call the reader's attention to some passages in the official instructions to the admiral and general; and to some points in Lord Rodney's official letter of the 26th of March, 1781. These two remarkable documents are given at length in the Appendix. (See O and P.)

It appears, from the admiralty instructions, that the view of his majesty's ministers, in directing this expedition, was to stop the supplies of provision and stores with which it was pretended, the enemies *of Great Britain were partially supplied*, through the medium of the Dutch islands, and particularly of St. Eustatius. On the other hand, in the official letter of Lord Rodney, it is represented, first, — that Martinique was blockaded by the squadron under Lord Hood; next,—that supplies of cordage and other necessaries had been refused to his ma-

jefty's ships by the merchants of St. Eustatius ; and, thirdly,—that the English merchants residing there, in particular, had exhibited proofs of their rancour, and shewn themselves inimical to his majesty's service.

These several circumstances I shall in turn comment upon ; premising only, that fifty-one days had elapsed between the capture and the date of Lord Rodney's official letter ; a time sufficient to have acquired every necessary intelligence as to facts : — the commander in chief had possession of the letter-books of most of the merchants there, (a few excepted,) which Lord Rodney's agent, who privately influenced every thing, had particular reasons for suppressing an inquiry into.) Inquisitors were appointed to give written characters of every person in the island : connexions were formed with some of the inhabitants ; and such, as were honoured with this distinction, were received at the table of a bountiful Dutchman, whose house had become head-quarters : and, lastly, a board of inquiry was instituted, at the head of which was placed the admiral's captain.

I. The professed object of the expedition, it has been stated, was to *prevent a supply of provisions and naval stores* to the enemies of this country ; and Lord Rodney asserts, that he had assiduously adopted the views of his majesty's ministers who planned it, and, among other measures, had blockaded Martinique. At the first opening of the sales, therefore, an order was issued, *that no naval or military stores should be included in the general sales.* But this order was on the same day evaded by a private bargain, which Mr. Akers, one of the general's agents, and the admiral's private agent and confidential friend, made

made for selling the ship *Helvetia*, loaded with a chosen cargo of the most useful and most valuable articles, and with a large quantity of naval and military stores. She was afterwards escorted by a man of war, under the orders of Lord Rodney, loaded as she was, to the Danish island of St. Thomas, the principal and only port, to which the Americans now resorted for supplies; and to which that commerce, for which St. Eustatius had been reprobated, was removed with additional privileges.

The proclamation, declaring the confiscation of property, had announced that the public sales were to begin on the 18th of March. No reason was assigned for the anticipation; but on the 15th my property was sold, and I was by proclamation prevented from becoming a purchaser of any part of it; though the inhabitants of the French islands, in particular, at that time at war with Great Britain, were invited to, and did attend, the sale.

As this sale was made before the general arrangements took place, the admiral's agent himself stood auctioneer; and, in order to remove the apprehensions of the neighbourhood, that the money, carried to the St. Eustatius market, or that the goods purchased with it would not be confiscated, an office was opened for *granting permits* to vessels, of all nations and of every description, laden with goods purchased at the sales; and a person, who possesses talents which would have qualified him for a place of more respectability, was appointed superintendant of the port.

Lord Rodney states, *that the island of Martinique was blockaded by the squadron under Lord Hood.* To promote the sales at Saint Eustatius, vessels of every description were permitted to sail for the enemy's ports, and for *Martinique* in particular. The  
number



number of these cannot be ascertained, but might be guessed at from the circumstance of twenty-five having sailed in one fleet, with full cargoes, for Martinique, cleared out by the superintendant, under whose signature it stood, *by order of the commanders in chief*; till the public confidence became well established, that the assurance was unnecessary.

It is to be observed, these French vessels entered at St. Eustatius as flags of truce from the French islands; and, to save appearances, some of them cleared at the superintendant's office for some of the neutral islands in the neighbourhood; but it is well known they generally went to the French islands, as the whole twenty-five did which are here spoken of.

More French vessels were seen at St. Eustatius, with French colours displayed, for the time that Lord Rodney and General Vaughan remained there, than had ever been seen in that bay at any time before, while it was a free port and open to all nations; for, now *the trade thence to the French islands was no longer exposed to capture*. The *Sandwich* lay there three months; two other ships of the line a great part of the time; and two captains of his majesty's navy were actually left on-shore at St. Eustatius to attend the appraisements and sales of the stores. The resort of French vessels to this grand military fair at last became so notoriously flagrant, that the regular questions, put by the acting officer for the day, on-board the admiral's ship, *the Sandwich*, under whose stern they necessarily passed before they anchored, were, *Whence came ye? Have ye money on-board?* — And, if they answered the last in the negative, they were ordered away. So that the blockade did not prevent a daily intercourse between Martinique and St. Eustatius; the French commanders, by these means,

means, were regularly informed of what was passing; they knew, perhaps, better than Lord Hood when that admiral was to expect the reinforcement of these ships and captains; and, no doubt, were pleased by the accounts they daily received of the effect which the sales at St. Eustatius were likely to have upon the campaign.

Among other vessels which sailed with these permits was the snow *Harmonie*, for the Danish free port of St. Thomas. She received her entire lading from the agent's office. It consisted of flour, wine, *cordage*, *sail-cloth*, and dry goods. In her way down, the *Harmonie* was stopped by a king's cruiser, and carried into Tortola; where she would have been condemned, had not an express by a government-schooner, stationed at St. Eustatius, been sent to prevent it. The government-schooner had been fitted up under the immediate inspection of the lieutenant who commanded the Sandwich guardship; and with a large quantity of lead and other articles, and all her ammunition and stores, was sold to a merchant at the free port of St. Thomas. The two last circumstances happened after Lord Rodney had quitted St. Eustatius.

To mention the American vessels cut out of the bay of St. Martin's by Lord Rodney, previous to the general commencement of hostilities with the Dutch, is rather out of the order of the narrative, but not foreign to the subject. These vessels were sold at St. Kitts before they had been condemned by the admiralty-court of that island; and, it is reasonable to presume, were purchased for American account, as they immediately went into that service. The precipitation of this business, is, among others, a proof of the unbounded influence of all  
who

who acted under the patronage of Lord Rodney; for, the usual formalities of office were dispensed with. — And it is notorious, that, of all the French truces which loaded at St. Eustatius and sailed with the admiral's permits, not one was ever interrupted by the numerous privateers with which those seas swarmed; though these were hardy enough to attack ships, under convoy of a Danish man of war, and carry them into port, where they were condemned, but their value, upon appeal, was afterwards ordered to be restored. Nor were any other of the vessels, with those goods on-board, attacked, except a Portuguese snow, which was carried into St. Kitts by a Glasgow privateer, and detained in the admiralty-court there, upon pretence of having warlike stores on-board. — She was, however, liberated upon the declaration of Daniel Ross, (see Appendix Q.) partner to the agent for South Carolina, intimate friend and associate of Aretas Akers, (Lord Rodney's agent,) deputy to General Vaughan's secretary, and auctioneer-general at the St. Eustatius sales.

II. Lord Rodney endeavours to justify his severity, towards the inhabitants of St. Eustatius, upon the pretence, that, through the medium of that island, the *American navigation* was chiefly supported. Was it to put a total stop to the circulation of such supplies, that his lordship found it necessary to remain *three months there*? or, was it to intercept their resources, that the admiral and general in person attended the sales of the very prohibited articles to the enemies of this country? Extravagant as this assertion might appear to the British reader, the fact is notorious and wants no proof.

At the first opening of the sales, we have already seen, that an order had been issued *to prevent the sale,*



*sale of naval and military stores*; but, when it was represented that the permitting these articles to be included would *promote the sale of the other goods*, the order was countermanded; and these prohibited articles were sold by public authority. (See Appendix, for Daniel Ross's affidavit, Q.)

If, notwithstanding the military discipline, so rigorously exercised there, that the staff-officers could not procure a dozen of wine for their tables but by a written permit, these things happened without the knowledge of the admiral and general, who were present the whole time, it will add to the public astonishment.

Thus much for the manner in which the designs of government were promoted; as expressed in Lord Rodney's public orders, with respect to supplies intended for the enemy; and the efficacy with which the blockade of Martinique, as stated in his lordship's letter, was executed.

III. Lord Rodney has asserted, in the same official letter, that supplies of naval and other stores had been *refused to his fleet* by the inhabitants of St. Eustatius. It would seem extraordinary, that a mixture of people of different nations, sentiments, and interests, whose pursuit was *buying and selling to the best customers*, should be *unanimous* in a resolution so opposite to common sense and their own interest, and to the experience which every man has of human nature. Some proofs have been recited, and still more are ready to be exhibited in the letter-books in question, that every article, which that market afforded, had been offered, not only to other commanders, but even to Lord Rodney himself,

D

who

who was on-shore, at his agent's house, when the letters in Appendix, R. & S. were delivered.

With respect to the *rancour to this country*, with which that nobleman has indiscriminately stigmatised the English merchants of St. Eustatius; the mistake, his lordship has been led into on that subject, will, I think, meet an ample refutation not only from the facts which I have related respecting myself, but from the inspection of the letter-books in question, if there remains the smallest necessity for vouchers to contradict a general charge, so evidently improbable.

When the government of that island was restored, the Dutch governor (who had been appointed by the Marquis de Bouillé) summoned all who called themselves English subjects to swear offensive and defensive allegiance to the States of Holland; which they peremptorily and unanimously refused; and they were permitted to take a qualified *oath of neutrality* (as appears in the Appendix, T.) upon *renouncing all claim to their rights as burghers*. After the shocking oppressions they had experienced from British governors, and the opposite treatment which the French general had indiscriminately exercised towards them all, who would have blamed them for a contrary conduct?

That the allurements of private emolument would induce every individual, settled at St. Eustatius for commercial purposes, to avail himself of the advantage, which a free port offered, of trading with the different belligerent parties, is natural to suppose; but that any general partiality existed, in the inhabitants of St. Eustatius, to the interests of France, or the other enemies of Great-Britain, is a charge positively without foundation. In that, as in all  
othe<sub>r</sub>

other communities, there were good and bad members; and the consequence of the capture has afforded no examples likely to reform the last-named class, or to secure the attachment of the first.

The French, long distinguished for the policy of seizing every opportunity to add lustre to their name and nation, availed themselves of that afforded by the measures at St. Eustatius, which, on all occasions, they disdained to imitate; but, on the contrary, contrasted by the most pointed liberality and magnanimity.

The liberty and property of Englishmen were invaded,—that of the French supported with unusual energy. The fair prize of war was equally and instantly divided among the French soldiers and sailors;—the British have received nothing, and spent their pay in pursuit of justice from the commanders, for whose glory and emolument they fought and bled; the French commanders did not plunder the property of the English which fell into their power;—they have since successfully interfered for that of their own subjects, which was taken from them, at the capture of St. Eustatius, by the English: the amount has been investigated, and the sufferers received, on the 12th of September, 1785, two millions of livres in compensation. (See Appendix, V.)

When St. Eustatius was retaken by the Marquis de Bouillé, the liberality of that commander knew no distinctions;—all private property was held sacred; even that which was in specie, taken from individuals, and found in the English governor's possession, to the amount of fifty thousand pounds, was, by order of that noble-minded general, and free of deduction, restored to the original owners, whether



Dutch, English, or of any other nation. The surplus for which no claimant appeared, and the property of which, for want of mark, could not be ascertained, was at once distributed among the soldiers and sailors; the most inferior of whom received more, as his share, than any English officer has even now received from the riches of that place, so deliberately devoted to conquest and plunder; and which are estimated, in General Vaughan's letter, at four millions sterling.

The inconveniences I experienced by the manner in which myself and family were banished, have been already stated. It was, therefore, an acceptable favour to be permitted, in consequence of the liberal arrangements made there by the French general, to return to my own house.

I shall close this part of my narrative by the following short detail, as a tribute due to the Marquis de Bouillé. St. Eustatius was taken on the Monday; the money found in the government-house, belonging to the inhabitants, was restored to its owners on Tuesday; the prize-money was divided among the officers, soldiers, and sailors, on Wednesday; the government of the island was fixed on Thursday; and, on Friday, the French departed, leaving the inhabitants more astonished at the liberality and disinterestedness of that general's conduct than at the boldness and success of his attempt to surprise the garrison. — It was by such conduct that the French general made friends of his enemies;—and, by a fatal reverse, that the English made enemies of their friends!

I have before said, that, after the loss of my property, I proceeded to England in hopes of procuring redress.

redress. Upon my arrival, in the month of October, 1782, my first object was to obtain payment for the 567*l.* 4*s.* which I had advanced for secret service, with the approbation and thanks of Lord Rodney and General Vaughan. On my first interview with Lord Rodney, that nobleman expressed much surprise at being informed that this sum had never been reimbursed: General Vaughan appeared to have no recollection of the circumstance; though a gallant general, who had officially and confidentially been privy to the whole, had the goodness to tell me, he would, if called upon, appear in evidence: and, after repeated applications and interviews, I procured a note from his lordship to Mr. Akers, stating a wish to be informed "what money had been paid me on a *certain occasion, agreeable to the direction Mr. Akers had from Lord Rodney and General Vaughan for that purpose,*" (see Appendix, X.) The only answer, that could be obtained from Mr. Akers, was a denial in writing of Lord Rodney's assertion; (see Appendix, Y.) that the admiral or general had ever directed him to reimburse the money, though they had frequently spoken together upon the subject.

The acknowledgement of the service, by which this debt was incurred, would have counteracted the assertions contained in Lord Rodney's official letter; a consideration which, no doubt, had its weight with that nobleman.

After a series of attendance and disappointment too tedious to detail, I was induced to make application to the lords of the treasury by a petition, prepared by the king's solicitor. It happened, however, to be directed to the wrong board, and was returned

returned with the word *Nil* inscribed upon the back. (See Appendix.)

In this dilemma, conceiving it might be very injurious, to my future pursuits, to discuss a story, blended with matter of such peculiar secrecy, in a court of law, (a resort to which, though prepared for, I was unwilling to have recourse to,) I had the good fortune to procure an introduction to a nobleman, who had long held one of the highest departments of state, and who had been the friend and patron of Lord Rodney. In the presence of this nobleman, that honourable lord solemnly pledged himself to give me a certificate to the admiralty for the payment of the sum in question. But this promise was never performed.

At last, finding no dependence could be placed in obtaining any voucher from Lord Rodney, and anxious to ascertain so material a fact, I presented a memorial to the lords of the admiralty; the subject was investigated, and Lord Rodney's report taken; and I had at last the satisfaction to see my claim admitted for the specific sum advanced, for which, by order of the noble lord, who presided at that board, I received an admiralty warrant, (but without interest, or any compensation for my trouble,) upon giving the receipt, which appears in the Appendix. (Z.)

My losses, in consequence of the capture of St. Eustatius, made the return of this money necessary to me; but the fact it established became of more importance, as a conspicuous feature in my claim for what had been taken from me on that occasion, which I continued to flatter myself would terminate favourably; but, in the various discussions produced  
by



by the complicated interests, involved in the St. Eustatius business, the courts of law having found it expedient to draw some line, **THAT OF RESIDENCE HAS BEEN MADE THE BOUNDARY OF JUSTICE**, and mine at St. Eustatius, though so justifiable to myself and so useful to my country, has unhappily excluded me from the chance of obtaining restitution by the ordinary mode of pursuit; while the merchants, who resided in this country, and established temporary agents there (to carry on the same trade for which the English merchants, who had a fixed residence at that free port long before, have been condemned, and) to make the most of the market which the war had created, have had a judgement in their favour. On the subject of crimes and punishments, *an eminent author has bewailed, that the present system of penal laws presents to the mind an idea of power rather than of justice*; the national faith is distinguished for the purity of its principles and for the scrupulous solemnity with which it has been observed. The united voice of the loyalists has been heard and attended to:—the ear of justice is alike open to all,—though the cry of many, who individually have received real injuries, wants force to penetrate through the surrounding labyrinths of the law.

It has been said more than once, by characters at the head of that department in this kingdom, and lately by the present lord chancellor; “that nothing  
 “in a free country should be held more sacred  
 “than private property; that it should never be  
 “liable to the caprice of any man or set of men,  
 “however important they might be; and that  
 “compensation should always be made to those  
 “whose

" whose interests have been sacrificed to public expedience." I have lost my property; as a pretext for the plunder, I have been attacked in my reputation; and to complete the peculiarity of the case, after a considerable waste of time, expence, and attendance, am yet to learn where effectual application can be made for that reparation, which is due to me as an individual, and which I still encourage the hope, that my country will consider consistent with its policy, justice, and liberality, to afford.

*It has been expected, that the making this narrative public would have been prevented,—which is the only apology that can be offered for its appearance, at the moment when the urgency of my private affairs obliges me to leave the kingdom,—with a resolution to return at the call of justice.*

## APPENDIX.

# A P P E N D I X.

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A.

*On his Majesty's Service.*

To R. D. Jennings, Esq. St. Eustatius.

SIR,

I DESIRE the favour of your sending me, as privately as possible, four thousand weight of powder, (viz. three thousand cannon, one thousand pistol,) five hundred musquets and bayonets, five hundred cutlasses, four hundred weight of junk, and what six-pound and four-pound round shot you can get, even to the amount of six hundred six-pounders, and four hundred four-pounders. I will see you paid.

I am, Sir,

St. Christopher's,  
October 19, 1778.

your most humble servant,  
Wm. Matthew Burt.

P. S. I wish you would send the above in a Dutch vessel.

E

SIR,



B.

SIR,

Yesterday I had your favour of the 23d, by Captain , and am much obliged for the trouble you have had. On the arrival of the articles I mentioned to you, I hope we shall be so well supplied, and very soon in so good a posture of defence, as not only to make every step of an enemy attended with danger and loss to them, but also a certainty of maintaining the sovereignty of this island, against any force the French king may send to attack it.

October 25,

Your most obedient servant,

1778.

*Wm. Matthew Burt.**R. D. Jennings, Esq.*

C.

SIR,

Notwithstanding I am so ill, that I can scarcely sit up, I will thank you with my own pen, for the attention you have shewn in the supplies I have wanted. I beg the remainder may come, and the powder that is the last sent, and what now remains behind, must be at four joes. Mr.

will send you the extract from the English newspaper; it comes in various private letters, (Mr. Fahie writes me,) from Liverpool, to gentlemen at Tortola, dated 7th September, and not the least hint

hint that Spain had declared the independency of N. America. My letters from government, dated August 7, assure me of the strictest amity between Spain and Great Britain. I have also particular instructions respecting this amity.

I am, sir,

*St. Christopher's,*  
Nov. 7, 1778.  
*R. D. Jennings, Esq.*

your most humble servant,  
*Wm. Matthew Burt.*

D.

DEAR SIR,

I was favoured with yours by your clerk, and the next day gave your letter to Captain Barker, agent for the transports, who carried it to Admiral Byron; he will, no doubt, think himself much obliged to you for your offer. I am no seaman, but if I can judge from the appearance of Byron's ships, some of them are much in want of masts and yards, and I think it a fortunate circumstance your being able to supply them. The Monmouth in particular, in my opinion, cannot turn to windward until she is repaired. I leave this in a day or two for Grenada, and shall with pleasure execute any commands you may have there, as I am with real regard,

Dear sir,

*St. Christopher's,*  
16 July, 1779.  
*R. D. Jennings, Esq.*

your most obedient servant,

E 2

E.

## E.

In case of need, the official letters of Admiral Byron, if referred to, would prove the subject of the letter.

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## F.

DEAR SIR,

Captain Hawkins, of the Deal-Castle, unfortunately lost his ship, and became a prisoner, with his crew, at Porto Rico. My particular friend there supplied that gentleman and his officers with what they wanted, and took their bills on London to the amount of 389*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* sterling, for his re-imbursment. Not having been lately informed of the course of exchange in these islands, he at a venture regulated these at 50 *per cent.* which Captain Hawkins, perhaps from being equally unacquainted with the exchange, thought low. As                    made this advance from the most disinterested motive, he has wrote me on the subject, and desired me to put this matter on such a footing, as may be perfectly consistent with the principles which induced him to make the advance. As I have not the honour to know Captain Hawkins,



kins, or where a letter might reach him, I take the liberty to write you on the subject, and beg that you would be pleased to let that gentleman know, it is at       's request I make this application, and that I am ready to make any reimbursement Captain Hawkins or yourself might think proper on that transaction, taking the liberty to assure you, so far as my interest and connexion can be useful. I shall at all times be happy to employ both in such acts of humanity, or for the service of my countrymen.

*St. Eustatius,*  
25 Jan. 1781,  
*Aretas Akers.*

I am, with respect,  
your obedient servant,  
*R. D. Jennings.*

*N. B. This letter will appear to have been written but nine days before the capture of St. Eustatius.*

G.

DEAR SIR,

Your favour of yesterday was handed me this morning. General Prescott has received the business with great zeal, and has dispatched it to General Vaughan and Admiral Rodney. I have also sent a particular relation to Mr. Hamilton, but I could hardly stoop to do it, having been so much vexed at the neglect and supine behaviour of the gentry in that department upon the late similar occasion. I assure you, I was so much ashamed

shamed of it, that I refrained going to St. Eustatia afterwards, lest I should see more disappointed persons, and such as had as much cause as myself, to despise them for their ingratitude to individuals, and want of zeal to their country. I am truly sorry I was the means of bringing any plague of this kind upon you. I know you have business of your own perplexing enough, and so have I, God knows. I also know myself to be very unfit to meddle in political matters. This was not of my own seeking, but I was called upon to make the first embassy, and in a way that I could not refuse it. I have repeated the proposals, and pointed out the proper channel to proceed in; God knows what will be the result; I expect it will be well received by one or the other of the great men, and as soon as I can get any information it shall be immediately communicated.

I am, with great regard,

Dear sir,

yours very affectionately,

*St. Kitt's,*

1780.

*R. D. Jennings, Esq.*

H.

DEAR SIR,

If the man you mention turns out equal to his pretensions, you may promise him every thing that sentiment or utility merit. Mr. Ramsay is just arrived from the fleet; he informs me that the admiral

miral is exceedingly desirous of establishing a channel for intelligence, and promises liberally to reward whatever promotes the service. Nothing, but his being so assiduously employed in watching the enemy's squadrons, prevented him determining on some plan before this last came down, and this last acknowledges that the person to whom I now write was the man whom he wished to be consulted in determining on the affair, especially as he knows him to be particularly conversant in places and situations where operations will probably point. But he dared not mention his name till he had consulted with persons who had a chance of having some weight with him, and it was his wish not to have his name used.

If your man will come up, I propose sending to Commissioner Laforey for a ship to carry him to the fleet. He shall have letters of introduction, announcing his intentions, and Mr. Ramsay will send by him particular letters to the Admiral and General Vaughan, which shall mention him as a man capable of answering their wishes in what they have so much at heart. He shall also have letters from me on the same subject. I thank you, my dear sir, for your letter, and shall at all times be happy to have your correspondence, being, with real regard,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

St. Kits,

A. Akers.

June 10, 1780.

R. D. Jennings, Esq.

N. B. Numerous letters from Mr. Akers are ready to be produced, recommending to me officers in the navy,  
and



*and acknowledging my civilities to them, and my public services. Yet this gentleman, when St. Eustatius was taken, refused me every kind of introduction, and is suspected, from the best grounds, of having, from an interested jealousy, been principally instrumental in prejudicing Lord Rodney against me, over whom his interest was unbounded.*

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## I.

DEAR SIR,

General Prescott has received answers, from General Vaughan and Admiral Rodney, to his letters respecting the secret business which I acquainted you that I had mentioned to him, previous to the application from another person. He tells me they are very earnest and liberal, and offer every thing that can be necessary before, as well as what will be thought generous and genteel after, any services are performed.

The general wishes to put the machine in motion immediately, and requests that some arrangement and plan might be furnished him as quick as possible. I told him of the matter having been since communicated to another person, and what disaster attended the first attempt, but I could give him no information of any thing that had been done since, as I am myself totally ignorant of it, not having seen the gentleman spoken of for some time, nor heard any thing from you relative to the matter. The general says that one channel  
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K.

I have received your obliging letter, and had half-an-hour's private conversation with our mutual friend. Had I known in time of the failing of the schooner with \_\_\_\_\_ on-board, I could, with great ease, I apprehend, have secured him, the Greyhound man of war being now here, who would have directly gone out; but, unfortunately, the master of the express which was sent to Mr.

F

fo

so that I knew not of it till after nine o'clock. I will, however, endeavour, as far as I can without raising suspicions, to get a fast sailing privateer or two to get out and take the chance of intercepting him. He would, I find, be a noble acquisition indeed. The other man will also be such an acquisition as has been long wished for. You may assure him of every thing being done for him which he pointed out to Mr. besides the most liberal rewards from government, which I have every right to assure him of. You have not said, in answer to my last, whether he would come up here to go on-board the man of war I expect from Antigua, for the purpose of carrying him to the fleet. Mr. thinks he would rather wish first to go in order to get the best and latest intelligence to convey on his return. Be so good as to settle that matter with him and let me know. Tell him to communicate freely his wishes to you; you will let me know them, and he may be assured they shall be complied with. With respect to yourself, you may rely on my honor that your name shall not be used but for the purpose of impressing Sir George with proper notions of the confidence which might be placed in you; and you will not only be intitled to, but may be assured from him, on the part of government, of, the most grateful and sensible returns.—I could have wished our friend could have gone down to you; I proposed it, but, well-inclined as he is, the sailing of the fleet soon gives him so much business, he fears it will be impossible. Believe me

St. Kitts,  
June 13, 1780.  
R. D. Jenuings, Esq.

your ever obt and aff. servant,  
A. Akers,  
L,



L.

DEAR SIR,

This will be delivered to you by Mr. who was unfortunately taken and brought in here. I have purchased the vessel for him, and he now carries her down. The rest will be told you by himself. You will do in this matter what you think right and best. I shall write very fully to you to-morrow;—at present I am greatly hurried.

Dear sir,  
your's, faithfully,  
*A. Akers.*

P. S. Mr. has been robbed of every thing. I wish to do my endeavours to procure restitution if possible. The cargo has not been purchased because I did not hold it essentially necessary.

*R. D. Jennings, Esq.*

M.

It is the commander-in-chief's orders that Richard Downing Jennings be permitted to pass and re-pass on-board any ship or vessel in the road as his business or the service may require.

*St. Eustatius,  
Feb. 14, 1788.*

*Ja. Cockburn,  
Q. M. General.*

F 2

General

General Vaughan orders that Mr. Jennings may be ordered to embark with his family to-morrow morning, at seven o'clock, and all the Americans.\*

Wednesday, April 11,  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  past 12 o'clock.

Ja. Cockburn,  
 Q. M. General.

\* N.B. *The original order, from the admiral, was adherens; but Americans is the quarter-master's own word.*

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N.

SIR,

I have, to my mortification, been obliged to defer my trip to Europe till the spring, as I could not go before without leaving the little that remains for the support of my family too much exposed.

I hear some regulations are taking place at St. Eustatius, and that the oaths of allegiance are to be tendered to all who will take them; by which test the liberty to remain there or not is to be established. Some such measure as this, in the early part of the Eustatius business, would have saved much trouble and anxiety to many.

I am so awkwardly and uncomfortably situated here, that I cannot resist the temptation of enquiring if any particular instructions have been left by the commander-in-chief, that would prevent the return of my family;—and if it might interfere with any line of conduct you might, in your own good judgement, have thought proper to adopt.

The

The civilities I have received from you, sir, in the early part of our captivity, have long since convinced me that, in your own private capacity as a gentleman, you meant me no injury.

I hope, sir, you will extend your good will so far as to pardon the liberty I take in this application, and to allow me to assure you of the respect with which I have the honour to be, sir,

*St. Kitts,* your most obedient and  
*August 9, 1781.* most humble servant,  
*To James Cockburn, Esq.* *R. D. Jennings.*  
*Governor of St. Eustatius.*

DEAR SIR,

I was this morning favoured with your letter, and sincerely wish that my power was equal to my inclinations to alleviate your distress; but, alas! it is not!

The commander-in-chief gave me no fresh instructions in any degree favourable, but, on the contrary, enjoined me to execute his former orders with respect to those who were ordered off the island.

The oaths now administered are only to those who are allowed to continue there.

I beg you to be assured that nothing would make me more happy than having an opportunity of convincing you that I am, with great esteem,

*St. Eustatius,* your most faithful servant,  
*August 10, 1781.* *Ja. Cockburn.*  
*Mr. Jennings.*



O.

*By the Commissioners for executing the Office  
of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain  
and Ireland, &c.*

The king having taken into consideration the many injurious proceedings of the States General of the United Provinces and their subjects, as set forth in his royal manifesto of this day's date, and being determined to take the most rigorous measures for vindicating the honour of his crown, and for procuring reparation and satisfaction, by attacking and subduing such of the Dutch possessions in the West-Indies as the commanders of his majesty's land and sea-forces in that quarter shall be of opinion may be attempted with success; and Lord George Germain, one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state having informed us, that, in a secret dispatch of the above mentioned date, he has signified to Major General Vaughan his majesty's pleasure, that he should consult with you upon the best means of carrying his majesty's intentions into immediate execution; you are therefore, in pursuance of his majesty's commands, signified to us by his lordship's above-mentioned letter, hereby required and directed to consult with Major General Vaughan, or the commander of his majesty's troops, upon the best means of attacking and subduing the possessions of the States-General of the United Provinces within your command; and whatever island or territory you or he shall concur in opinion may be attacked with success,

success, you are with his majesty's ships under your command, or such of them as may be necessary, to co-operate with and give all possible assistance to the commander of the land-forces in attacking and subduing the same; and when subdued in keeping possession thereof, if you and he shall judge it necessary and proper to do so. The islands which present themselves as the first objects of attack are St. Eustatius and St. Martin's, neither of which it is supposed are capable of making any considerable resistance against such a land and sea-force as you and the general can send against them, if the attack be suddenly made and carried on with that vigour and intrepidity which your high characters leave no room to doubt will be exerted upon this occasion; and as the enemy have derived great advantages from those islands, and it is highly probable considerable quantities of provisions and other stores are laid up there, or are upon their way thither, which may fall into our hands, if we get possession speedily, it is his majesty's pleasure that we should, and we do hereby accordingly, recommend to you the immediate attack and reduction of those islands, as of very great importance to his majesty's service.

Given under our hands, the twentieth of December, one thousand, seven hundred, and eighty.

*Sandwich,  
Lisburne,  
Bamber Gascoyne.*

*To Sir George Brydges Rodney, Bart.  
Knight of the Bath, Admiral of the  
White, &c. or to the Commander  
in Chief for the Time being, of his*

*Majesty's*

*Majesty's Ships and Vessels at Barbadoes, the Leeward Islands, &c.*

*By Command of their Lordships,  
Ph. Stephens.*

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P.

*By the Roebuck Packet,      Sandwich, at St. Eustatius,  
Duplicate by the Swift Packet.      26 March, 1781.*

SIR,

Since my last of the 17th instant, by his majesty's ship the Venus, I must desire you will please to acquaint their lordships, that Captain Cadogan, in his majesty's ship Licorne, with the trade for Jamaica under his convoy, has sailed, and that Martinique continues to be closely blockaded by the squadron of his majesty's ships under the command of Rear Admiral Sir Samuel Hood. An anecdote, which I think highly necessary their lordships should be acquainted with, has lately come to my ears, and which will prove the rancour the people settled in this island, and who call themselves English subjects, (though they lost the noble privileges annexed thereto when they became Dutch burghers,) bore to their mother country.

It is well known, that his majesty's fleet employed in these seas, and where the wear and tare is much more considerable than in the European seas, had frequently been in want of all sorts of cordage, more especially since the late hurricane, and the storm



storm of wind the Squadron under my command encountered on its leaving the coast of America.

The distressed situation of the fleet under my command obliged me to give orders, to the store-keeper of his majesty's yard at Antigua, to purchase cordage to refit them; and, although by himself and his deputies every endeavour was made to purchase cordage at St. Eustatius, such was the ill-will of the inhabitants, none could be procured, under the pretence they had none in store,\* when, behold, upon taking the island and seizing the store-houses, many hundreds of tons were found therein, which must have been lodged there a considerable time, for the sole purpose of supplying his majesty's public enemies, and the rebellious subjects in America; upwards of fifty American vessels have been taken since the capture of this island; the numerous letters, found on-board them, plainly prove that, their hulls and masts excepted, all their rigging, sails, cannon, powder, ammunition, and stores of all kinds, in order to navigate them, were sent from this island, without whose assistance the American navigation could not possibly have been supported.

These, sir, are facts incontrovertible, and can be proved by numberless letters of correspondence between them, *as well as by their own books, which were sent to England in his majesty's ship the Venus, in order to their being laid before his majesty's ministers.*

So open and barefaced has been the conduct of this island, in supplying his majesty's enemies with naval and military stores, that without their assist-

\* It is possible such an application might have been made when there was no cordage in the market; but it is just as probable, that, if there had been any, it would not have been refused.

ance they would never have been enabled to have continued any considerable time in these seas ; and so inimical have they always proved to his majesty, that by Mr. Mockton, store-keeper at Antigua, I am assured, that in the space of several years, and at times when there was the greatest want of cordage, not more than thirty ton in the whole was ever procured from this island.

The convoy for Great Britain shall sail agreeable to their lordships directions.

I have the honour to be,

Sir, your most obedient, and

*Pb. Stephens, Esq.*

most humble servant,

*G. B. Rodney.*

Q.

*St. Christopher, }  
In the Vice-Admiralty. }*

## THE KING,

Against the Snow Joachim Saint Anna.

### The Deposition of Daniel Ross.

Personally appeared Daniel Ross, who, being sworn on the holy evangelists of Almighty God, saith, — That, on or about the 27th day of March last, all the goods and merchandise of Messrs. Milner and Crawford, of St. Eustatius, were, by order of the commanders in chief, sold by this deponent at public sale, as vendue-master.—And this deponent farther

farther faith, that there was, in the said store of Milner and Crawford, a large chest of arms, reserved for the use of his majesty, and which was given in charge to William Gordon, the acting deputy, quarter-master. — This deponent farther faith, that in the store of J. D. Piest, purchased by Edmund Proudfoot of Grenada, there was a considerable quantity of Raven's duck and Russia drab, which was, by consent of Matthew Foster and Aretas Acres, Esquires, agents, sold, together with the other goods in the said store, to the said Proudfoot. Said deponent farther faith, that, when the sales of the stores first began, and for eight or ten days after, all the canvass and Ravens's duck were excepted from sale in all the stores, but that afterwards, by particular desire of the agents, this deponent, in order to raise the value of the stores, assured the purchasers of such stores, that all the Raven's duck that might be found in them, they, the purchasers, were intitled to; and, in consequence of such declarations at the sales, the superintendant had directions to clear out all the Raven's duck shipped off in the fundry stores, and one of the agents certified, on the back of such certificate, his approbation of the same. — Said deponent farther faith, that the goods and merchandise of Mr. J. D. Piest, purchased by Edmund Proudfoot of Grenada, shipped on-board a Portugeze snow, had been before sold by him, this deponent, at vendue, to John Dunlop, of St. Croix, and which purchase, by particular indulgence of the agents, was set aside to ease the said Dunlop. — Said deponent farther faith, that, when the said goods and merchandise of J. D. Piest were called out a second time for sale, in order to raise the



price offered, all the goods whatever were sold in that store, without any reservation, as had been sometimes customary, and, in particular, a parcel of Raven's duck and Russia drab packed up together, and being about one hundred and forty, or fifty pieces.

*Sworn before me, this*

*10th of July, 1781.*

*John Fabie.*

*Daniel Ross.*

St. Christopher, October 4, 1786. These are to certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original, now remaining on record amongst the admiralty proceedings in the secretary's office of this island.

*E. Moore,*

*Reg. in Admiralty.*

N. B, When the two following letters were written, Lord Rodney was actually at St. Kits, and at the house of Mr. Akers, his agent, to whom they are directed.

R,

SIR,

A Captain Cornelius Claassen Cool, of the ship de Vrou Elizabeth, has brought me a parcel of opened letters to-day,—and says he has been carried into Mountserrat, — from thence acquitted, and is  
now

now at St. Kits, where his ship was carried by some of Admiral Rodney's ships. He says he has been discharged from the admiral, as to the right of detaining the vessel, — but that his excellency wants the wine he has on-board for the use of the navy. The letter, informing particulars of his cargo, he says, he inclosed in one of his own, and gave it to one of the officers who was on-board his ship, requesting him to forward it here; and that, having waited some time for an answer in vain, he concluded to come down here, to see those to whom his cargo is consigned, — that two hundred and odd pipes of the wine are for me, and fifty odd pipes for Messrs. Noble and Lindos, of this island; the first by order of Messrs. Hope and Co.—the last by that of Messrs. Muilmans, of Amsterdam, all shipped by Messrs. Comyns, Brothers, and Powers, of Teneriff. As these letters have not come to hand, and Mr. Noble as well as myself are without any information of particulars, we know not what to do in the matter, and request you would be so good as to let us know all you might have heard of the matter, for our government; and, if we are at liberty to treat for the wine, we should be happy to have an opportunity of supplying Admiral Rodney, and would wish to add to the parcel about one hundred hogshheads of Lisbon wine, which I have lately received, besides an hundred dozen of pretty good claret. If the admiral has occasion for these things, or any other to be procured here, they shall go on very reasonable terms. I expect a ship every moment with wine from Bourdeaux, and another from Rotterdam, with cordage, either or all of which shall be furnished at short notice.

Your

Your occupations will prevent your attending to these things, which has induced me to ask the favour of Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ to deliver this letter, and to receive your answer, by which you will particularly oblige

*St. Eustatius,*  
*July 28, 170.*  
*Aretas Akers, Esq.*

your most obedient servant,  
*R. D. Jennings.*

S.

DEAR SIR,

Considering how much you have to do just now, I wrote to my good friend, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ respecting the wine on-board the Dutch snow, Vrow Elizabeth. He writes me you have been so kind as to tell him the admiral would purchase the whole at a reasonable price. You may well believe I should be sorry to let such an opportunity pass. I hope you will give as much for it as you can. The house, which shipped this at Teneriffe, sends remarkable good wine to market, equal to any Madeira generally bought out, and not particularly ordered:—it is charged at sixty dollars the pipe, and amounts, with freight, &c. to 22*l.* 17*s.* 8*d.* I have explained myself fully to Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ on the subject, and should think the cost a generous price; but, as such customers do not come to market every day,



day, I wish to deal on any terms that will justify me to the owners. Cordage, claret, powder, and various other things, I could supply, and should be glad of an opportunity, if such are wanted. As Mr. is unfortunately confined, your seeing him will do him a pleasure, and me a particular favour.

*St. Eustatius,*  
*August 1, 1780.*  
*Aretas Acres, Esq.*

I am always, very truly,  
your obedient servant,  
*R. D. Jennings.*

T.

*The parties are sworn to the following oath, in the presence of the assembled court.*

I do swear, upon the Holy Evangelists of the Almighty God, that, considering myself as a British subject, I will nor shall not, during the course of this present war, take up arms against the States-General of the United Provinces, their subjects, and allies; among which allies I consider the powers that are now or may come in war with Great Britain; but shall be and remain neutral, giving up, therefore, all pretended right and title to the privilege of a Dutch burgher of St. Eustatius, for now and for ever. I also swear to be true and trusty to the government;—that I shall not supply myself,  
or

or cause myself to be supplied, with any arms or weapons whatsoever, defensive or offensive, and promise to deliver up those I may have; and, in case of an alarm, I will and shall remain at my lodging, and, by no means whatever, give nor cause to be given occasion to any intelligence, confusions, or treacheries;—all of which I do solemnly swear to abide by and perform, to all intents and purposes, under such penalties as the law directs.

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## V.

The French at St. Eustatius, at its capture, were in all 39, including women and clerks. They stated their loss high. The subject was investigated between the two courts, and established at 2,724,960 livres Tournois; but, as the payment of this sum was suspended from motives not publicly known,—the court of France, by a public act, passed the 12th of September, 1785, before the notary, Mr. Moreau, engaged to compensate the sufferers in the following manner, viz.

Comptant,	livres, 400,000
En assignations, sur la régie des domaines, payable par dixieme de mois-en-mois, à compter du premier de Janvier, 1786,	1,000,000
En bordereaux de rentes à 4 per Ct. portant intérêt du premier Juilliet, 1785,	600,000

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In all, livres Tournois 2,000,000

W.

W.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your favour of yesterday. Being at Basseterre, I immediately waited on Mr. Akers with your letter to him. I am sorry to tell you that your correspondence with him has been destroyed, he says, by your desire. I have preserved my part of it, and you may depend on having it sent you by the first conveyance after my return, which will not be till tomorrow evening.

My heart bleeds, my dear sir, when I consider the treatment you have met with. Your abilities must all be called forth to carry you through this distressful occasion with firmness and composure. I earnestly sympathize with you; and I feel exceedingly for Mrs. Jennings and the little folks. I had heard, before the receipt of your letter, that you were ordered to hold yourself in readiness to embark; but I still hoped that the order would not have been carried into execution. The house I live in is clear for your reception and family's. — I entreat, my dear sir, you will make it your retreat; — it will make me happy if you will afford me an opportunity of shewing my attention, and that I am, unalterably,

my dear sir,  
St. Kits,

your very sincere friend  
and well-wisher.

March 2, 1781.

R. D. Jennings, Esq.

H

St.



*St. Martin's.**Before the honourable  
Charles Payne Brotherson.*

Personally appeared Jacob Howel, late master of the schooner Adonis, who, being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth and sayeth, that the deponent did, on the thirtieth day of February, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one, sail from the island of Curaçoa in the said schooner Adonis, the property of Messrs. R. D. Jennings and Co. merchants of St. Eustatius; and, on this deponent's arrival at St. Martin's, the twenty-third day of the said month, the deponent landed the sum of eight thousand dollars, at this deponent's dwelling-house, shipped by Messrs. Tho. Webb and Co. merchants of Curaçoa for account of the said Messrs. R. D. Jennings and Co. and that, on the twenty-eighth of the said month, Walter Young, Esq. captain of the Sandwich, about nine o'clock at night, together with other officers and soldiers, called upon this deponent, at his house, and the said Walter Young did, by order of Sir George Brydges Rodney, demand sixteen bags of money, agreeable to an information, landed by this deponent, at the deponent's house, on the twenty-third, between the hours of twelve and one o'clock at night; and, on this deponent's non-compliance with his demand, a confiscation of this deponent's property immediately to ensue: — this deponent did then deliver, to the said Walter Young, fifteen bags of money, four of which were shipped by Messrs. Tho. Webb and Co. at Curaçoa, for account of R. D. Jennings and Co.

Co. at St. Eustatius, each bag containing one thousand dollars, being marked R. D. J. No. 1 a 4. And this deponent was, together with the schooner Adonis, taken to the island of St. Eustatius, thence to the island of St. Christophers, where the schooner Adonis, together with her loading, was libelled; and, on this deponent's examination upon oath, did declare that there was yet, in the possession of Tho. Richardson and Abraham Howel, a parcel of money, landed by this deponent, part of which was four bags, containing each bag one thousand dollars, marked R. D. J. No. 5 a 8, shipped by Messrs. Tho. Webb and Co. for account of Messrs. R. D. Jennings and Co. which was taken from the said Tho. Richardson and Abraham Howel, by Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ commander of his majesty's cutter Sylph, by order of Sir George Brydges Rodney, whilst this deponent was at St. Christophers, under libel; and farther this deponent saith not.

*Sworn, before me, this 6th*

*Jacob Howel.*

*day of July, 1781,*

*Charles Payne Brotherson.*

# X.

Lord Rodney's compliments to Mr Akers, and wishes to be informed what money was paid Mr. Jennings, of St. Eustatia, to reimburse him his advance on a certain occasion, agreeable to the directions

rections Mr. Akers had from Lord Rodney and General Vaughan for that purpose.

*Hartford-street,*  
*March 10, 1783.*

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## Y.

Mr. Akers's compliments to Mr. Jennings, and is very sorry he called when Mr. A. was from home. He received the following answer from his father, yesterday morning, which he would have acquainted Mr. Jennings of, had he not expected to have seen Mr. J. — “ I have this moment got your letter, inclosing one from Lord Rodney, on the subject of paying some money to Mr. Jennings; his lordship writes to me to know how much of that money I paid, agreeable to his directions and General Vaughan's. The truth is I never received directions from either of them to pay it, nor had I the disposal of the money at St. Eustatius, as you know, if I had received such directions, I should certainly have asked from them an order on the agents in general, of which I was but one, for that purpose, for, really, I thought Mr. Jennings should be paid his money, which he so well deserved; and I wished, also, to be repaid the money I was myself in advance on that account, not one shilling of which I have yet got; and I am glad Mr. Jennings has  
 “ agitated



“ agitated the matter, as we shall now stand a  
 “ chance of coming at it; and he may be assured of  
 “ my giving every proper assistance. The true  
 “ state of the case is this, (and which my Lord Rod-  
 “ ney must have forgotten),— I mentioned the mat-  
 “ ter to his lordship, and gave my opinion that the  
 “ money should be paid. His lordship agreed it  
 “ ought to be, and that he would speak to General  
 “ Vaughan for that purpose, as it came properly  
 “ under his department, and he himself (his lord-  
 “ ship) never drew any bills on government. I  
 “ confess Lord Rodney shewed every possible dispo-  
 “ sition for having the money paid; whether he  
 “ forgot to mention it to General Vaughan, or  
 “ whether the general was not disposed to have any  
 “ thing to do in it, from not having been the man  
 “ immediately concerned, I know not; however  
 “ so it was, I never received any orders to pay the  
 “ money to Mr. Jennings or to repay myself. I  
 “ would write to my Lord Rodney on the subject,  
 “ but as many things may be necessary to explain,  
 “ and as my absence will not be long, I think it  
 “ best to defer it till I come to town. In the mean  
 “ time you may see Mr. Jennings, and read him  
 “ this letter, or shew him the whole of it.”

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 Z.

Received of Henry Parker, Esq. by order of the  
 lords of the admiralty, the sum of 567*l.* 4*s.* in con-  
 sequence of a memorial presented to their lordships,  
 for

( 62 )

for the return of that sum, advanced on secret and particular service, in the year 1780, while he resided at St. Eustatius, at the request of Lord Rodney, by his agent, Aretas Akers, Esq. in full of all demands for the above service.

*London,*  
*April 9, 1784.*

Signed, R. D. JENNINGS.

T H E E N D.

and  
re-  
lod-  
ll of  
GS.